

Nebraska Good Water News

ISSUE 1/2021



Nebraska Rural Water Association

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Nebraska Good Water News

Issue 1/2021

“Keeping Our Water Safe”

Board of Directors

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Website: www.nerwa.org

“Nebraska Good Water News” is a quarterly publication of the NEBRASKA RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION, 3390 Ponderosa, Wahoo, Nebraska 68066. Phone 1-800-849-8039 or (402) 443-5216 or FAX (402) 443-5274. Copies are mailed to all member rural and municipal water operators, Federal and State Legislators, associates and individual members.

The NEBRASKA RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION is dedicated to the improvement and assistance of all public water systems in the State of Nebraska.

NOTICE: Nebraska Rural Water Association does not endorse any particular product or company in this publication. Membership and advertising should not be taken as an endorsement.

On the cover:

Water tower located in the Village of Pender, Nebraska.

"This Institution is an Equal Opportunity Provider and Employer."

**Wastewater Operator
Training**

April 14	Bridgeport
May 12	Macy
June 23	Sutton
July 13	Chadron
August 11	Hartington
October 12	Franklin
November 16	Ogallala
December 14	Firth

Wastewater Training

January 27	Wahoo
February 24	Wood River
March 24	Wayne
April 28	Omaha
May 19	Chadron
July 21	Kearney
August 25	Bridgeport
October 6	Omaha
November 17	Duncan
December 8	Wahoo

**Backflow Continuing
Education Training**

January 26	Gordon
January 27	Bridgeport
January 28	Ogallala
February 9	Nebraska City
February 11	Stanton
April 20	Cairo
April 22	Crete
April 28	Wahoo
September 21	McCool Junction
September 23	Ord
October 5	So Sioux City
October 7	O'Neill
November 17	Wahoo
December 7	Mitchell
December 9	Cambridge
December 15	Wahoo

2021 TRAINING

**Annual Conference
March 15-17**

Younes Conference Center
Kearney, NE
Gering, Nebraska

**Fall Western Conference
September 28-30**

Gering Civic Center
Gering, NE



To register, please visit:
www.nerwa.org

**Grade 6 Backflow Prevention Cross-Connection Control Course - 5 Day
Wahoo Office**

January 11-15	FULL
April 5-9	FULL
October 18-22	

CONFERENCE CHANGES

For all of the operators who plan to attend the annual conference in March, the Nebraska Rural Water Association will be taking extra steps to try and keep everyone safe and healthy. Recently, capacity restrictions have been loosened but we intend to stay the same path that we have chosen for this conference. Classrooms will be double in size to allow for social distancing. Instead of having four break-out sessions, there will be three. One classroom will be Diamond Ballrooms 4 and 5, and the other classroom will be Diamond Ballrooms 9 and 10. We will also be using one of the large ballrooms at the Holiday Inn. Hopefully this will help operators feel safe as they attend the classes.

Meals will also be something that we are attempting to do a little differently. For those who have attended this conference in the past, the meals are the best times to catch up with other operators. This can be very crowded and congested. We will

still have fantastic meals for everyone, but operators will be served their meal and have the choice to sit socially distanced in the ballroom or take the meal to their motel room and enjoy. Heck, if you're not hungry, you may have a great plate of leftovers!

Finally, we hope you all can attend this great event and know that when things get back to "normal" we will celebrate communities and operators like no other. This year, we just want to make sure everyone gets the recertification hours they need!

— TRAINING INFORMATION —

Just a couple reminders:

The membership directory will be mailed in February. Each member system will receive one copy. If you would like additional copies, contact the office.

Information for license certification classes:

The NDHHS does the certification classes for water operators, Grades 1-4. Contact Mike Wentink for information, 308-530-3930.

Contact the NDEE for information regarding certification for wastewater, Grades 1-4. Their number is 402-471-2186.

We still do the classes for backflow certification, Grade 6. The class for April is full. The next backflow certification class is October 18-22. You can register for this class on our website, www.nerwa.org.

NeRWA Annual Conference Younes Conference Center Kearney, Nebraska

We hope you have registered but, if not, we would like you to join us. There will be new training sessions, lots of great prizes and giveaways, and, of course, some fun.

Below are the hotels – ask for NeRWA room blocks.

Field Inn & Suites (*connected to center*) – (308) 236-4200

Comfort Inn (*connected to center*) – (308) 236-3400

Hampton Inn (*next door*) – (308) 234-3400

LaQuinta (*next door*) – (308) 237-8100

CONFERENCE PRESENTATION DESCRIPTIONS

UPDATES TO NEBRASKA DRINKING WATER DIVISION—Sue Dempsey, DHHS Administrator. This session will help guide us into the future of the new regulation, rules, and anything else that may be changing in the drinking water world.

LEAD AND COPPER RULE UPDATE—Mary Poe, DHHS. Several revisions have been made to the Lead and Copper Rule. Find out these permanent changes and see how they will affect your system.

NeWARN Update—Ryan Hurst, City of Wahoo, Nebraska. Warn has been called into action several times in the past few years. Find out how it works and how to join.

EFFECTS OF A PANDEMIC ON THE DRINKING WATER WORLD FORUM—Dave Jundt, Rich Koenig,

DHHS Field Reps. It's been a difficult year for water operators (essential workers) to do their job in an ordinary way. Hear from the presenters and attendees on how they have overcome and adapted to the new normal.

LINE MAIN VALVE INSERTION—Derek Olson, Lincoln Winwater. This session will show you how to put a valve in place without having to shut the water off.

BASIC SEWER MAINTENANCE—Monte Dakan, Johnson Service. See the new ways to help improve the efficiency of your ever-aging collection system.

IMPLEMENTING AN EFFECTIVE BACKFLOW PROGRAM—Rich Koenig, DHHS Field Rep. Find out what it takes to not only have a backflow program but implement it into a very effective tool.

Continued on Page 10

NOTES *of* THANKS

VILLAGE OF HUBBELL
307 INDIANA ST
HUBBELL NE 68375
402-324-4182

November 23, 2020

Dear NRWA

On behalf of the Village of Hubbell, we would like to thank the Circuit Riders, Randy Hellbusch, Scott Finke, and Mike Stanzel for all their help during the completion of our new well with our water rate study. Thank you also for coming and exercising water valves, water line locations and help with learning about our new water system. Thank you for providing valuable training sessions and information for our water operator.

Please accept the enclosed \$100 donation in appreciation of all the help provided to the Village of Hubbell. We look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely



Sherry Yacks
Village of Hubbell
Board Chairman

City of Elgin

104 Pine Street
P.O. Box 240
Elgin, NE 68635
Phone: 402-843-5822 Fax: 402-843-5585
Email: cityofelgin@telebna.com
Website: www.elginnebraska.org

November 16, 2020

Nebraska Rural Water Association
3390 Ponderosa
Wahoo, NE 68606

Dear NE Rural Water Association,

The City of Elgin would like to thank Randy Hellbusch for taking the time to complete a sewer rate study, as well as, attending a City Council meeting to present the study. The information was very beneficial in assisting the Elgin City Council to establish a new sewer rate.

Please accept the enclosed donation in appreciation for the help and expertise provided.

Sincerely,



Kristin Childers
City Clerk



January 6, 2021

Nebraska Rural Water Association
3390 Ponderosa Drive
Wahoo, NE 68066

Dear Nebraska Rural Water Association,

The City of Syracuse would like to take the time to thank your organization for the services it provides to Nebraska communities. The knowledge and expertise that your technicians provide is always appreciated.

Syracuse would like to thank Rural Water for helping the City sewer smoke our sewer system and run cameras in our sewer to detect any leaks.

Please accept the enclosed \$200.00 donation for your equipment fund. The work of the Rural Water Association and resources you offer are invaluable to so many. Thank you again for your time and efforts.

Sincerely,



Jeff Vogt
Superintendent of Public Works
City of Syracuse

402-269-2173
cityclerk@syracuse.com

495 Midland Street, P.O. Box F | Syracuse, NE 68446

Discover more about the City of Syracuse at: www.SyracuseNE.com

Dear Nebraska Rural Water -
We would like to thank Scott Finke & NRWA for allowing us to utilize the valve exerciser. We appreciate all that you do for the Village of Hershey. We value your time & expertise!

- Village of Hershey -

Thank you for always being there to help our community!
you are all the Best!
Merry Christ mas!!
Village of Humbell

Village of Platte Center, Ne.
402-246-2135
P.O. Box 125, 315 4th St.
Platte Center, Ne 68653
pcvillage1@eaglecom.net
www.plattecenter.com

To Whom it may concern:

The Village of Platte Center would like to formally thank Randy Hellbusch for creating a beneficial Water Rate Study in August of 2020.

This has helped the Village Board understand the need for water rate increase in order to properly fund our new well.

Thank you so much Randy!

Nicolette Coble
Village Clerk
315 4th St.
Platte Center, Ne 68653
pcvillage1@eaglecom.net
402-246-2135



LOWER NIOBRARA
NATURAL RESOURCES DISTRICT
WEST KNOX RURAL WATER SYSTEM

P.O. Box 281
Verdigre, NE 68783

Office: (402) 668-7223
Cell: (402) 841-8196

1/11/21

Nebraska Rural Water Association
3390 Ponderosa Drive
Wahoo, NE 68066

NE Rural Water Association,

West Knox Rural Water System would like to thank Randy Hellbusch for his quick response and professionalism in conducting our recent rate study, he is always flexible and willing to go above and beyond!

We appreciate everything your organization and staff provide for us, we always look forward to working with you all.

Thanks again!

Staff of West Knox Rural Water System
PO Box 281
Verdigre, NE 68783

December 28, 2020

Nebraska Rural Water Association
3390 Ponderosa
Wahoo, NE 68066

NeRWA,

The City of Mitchell Water/Wastewater Dept. would like to thank you for going above and beyond in these uncertain times. I would like to especially thank you for coming out and teaching the classes so we can continue to learn, communicate with other operators and get continuing education hours. Thank you for all that you do and all the services you provide.

Sincerely

William Baer
City of Mitchell
Water/Wastewater Foreman
1632 13th Street
Mitchell, NE 69357

Greetings,
Just wanted to drop a quick note to say "Thank You" to Randy and all the staff for everything you do for us. We appreciate you all so very much!

The Village
of Silver Creek ☺



City of North Bend

CINOBEN@GPCOM.NET

P.O. BOX 401
607 MAIN STREET
NORTH BEND, NE 68649-0401
402-652-3584 FAX: 402-652-3591

January 7, 2021

Nebraska Rural Water Association
3390 Ponderosa St
Wahoo NE 68066

RE: thank you

Dear Nebraska Rural Water Association,

The City of North Bend would like to thank the Nebraska Rural Water Association for their assistance. This past year Randy Hellbusch helped the City with a utility rate study on our water and sewer fees. We also would like to thank Mike Stanzel and his helpers that located some missing curb stops for us. We truly appreciate the assistance your organization provides to communities.

Respectfully,

Theresa Busse
Theresa Busse
City Clerk



All By Yourself

By Mike Stanzel, Circuit Rider

This seems to be an issue that we are seeing more and more every day. Budgets get tighter and older operators retire with no one to take their place. It can be challenging and dangerous to keep up with the daily chores and emergencies that can arise.

I ran into a situation that inspired me to write this article several weeks ago in a small Nebraska town.

I receive a call from a village I work with quite a bit that needed assistance with locating several main valves under

gravel streets. I responded promptly and was able to find the valves in a relatively short amount of time. So I asked “Mr. Town Man” what is going on that these valves needed to be found and dug up? He stated that there was a water leak a few blocks over so I asked who is helping to dig, and he replied, “No One, it’s just me.” I looked at my watch and it wasn’t even noon yet. It was a 55-degree day in December and I replied, “Let’s go. I will help you.” With a puzzled look on his face, he was much obliged and took me up on my offer.

Well, he operated the backhoe, I grabbed the shovel and probe like the olden days and we went to work. Turns out it was a leaking corporation stop. He did also manage to self-excavate the neighbors service line as well. So now we have two lines to repair and not enough parts to make the repairs. Fortunately, he was able to band aid it together and the proper parts were there the next morning.

One main point here is never try to excavate and repair a waterline by yourself. There are way too many things that can go wrong. Trench collapse, stuck in the muck, contact with other utilities due to not having a spotter — the list can go on and on. You always have to think SAFETY FIRST.



If you are a one-man band and you need assistance or a second set of hands, guidance, instructions, etc., whether it’s an emergency or not, please give me a call to help. If I can’t make it, chances are good I can find someone to assist you. We certainly do not want to see anyone get injured trying to complete a job by themselves, that a phone call could have prevented.



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DO IT THE RIGHT WAY
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Capacity Development and Sanitary Surveys

By Randy Hellbusch, Circuit Rider

States are asked to address eight main elements when conducting a Sanitary Survey according to EPA. These are the items that EPA feels are the main contributors to compliance issues. Let's take a look at how these eight elements line up with the Managerial, Technical and Financial aspects of Capacity Development:

The eight main elements in a Sanitary Survey are:

**SOURCE
TREATMENT
DISTRIBUTION
STORAGE**

**PUMPS
MONITORING & REPORTING
MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS
OPERATOR CERTIFICATION**

Now let's take a look at the three areas of Capacity Development and see how these eight items fit in to the components involved in water system viability.

1. Managerial Capacity Components

- a. Ownership Accountability
**MONITORING & REPORTING
OPERATOR CERTIFICATION**
- b. Staffing and Organization
**MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS
OPERATOR CERTIFICATION**
- c. External Linkages
MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS

2. Technical Capacity Components

- a. Source Protection and Adequacy
SOURCE
- b. Infrastructure
**SOURCE
TREATMENT
DISTRIBUTION
STORAGE
PUMPS**
- c. Technical Knowledge
**DISTRIBUTION
STORAGE
PUMPS
MONITORING & REPORTING
MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS
TREATMENT OPERATIONS
OPERATOR CERTIFICATION**

3. Financial capacity components:

- a. Revenue Sufficiency
**SOURCE
DISTRIBUTION
STORAGE
PUMPS
MONITORING & REPORTING
MANAGEMENT & SOURCE
TREATMENT OPERATIONS
OPERATOR CERTIFICATION**
- b. Fiscal Controls
MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS
- c. Creditworthiness
MANAGEMENT & OPERATIONS

As you can see, the Sanitary Survey goes hand in hand with the Capacity Development guidelines. The goal behind all of this is to prevent tomorrow's water system violations today. It is getting more and more crucial that everyone from certified operators, to the office staff, to the board members, be in tune to what is going on in the water system to be sure that all water systems are able to deliver safe, affordable drinking water. It takes a team effort from everyone involved, right down to the consumer to make sure all of our small water systems remain able to serve clean affordable water to our friends and neighbors well into the future. If NeRWA can be of any help to keep your system in compliance and not considered one of EPA's "problem" systems, don't hesitate to give us a call.



Moving Forward

By Pat Petersen, Training and Technical Assistance Specialist

I was going through some photos on my phone and I came across a picture of this saying, “IF YOU DON’T GO AFTER WHAT YOU WANT, YOU’LL NEVER HAVE IT. IF YOU DON’T ASK, THE ANSWER IS ALWAYS NO. IF YOU DON’T STEP FORWARD, YOU’RE ALWAYS IN THE SAME PLACE.” Cautiously and safely, our organization plans to take that step and continue planning, and hopefully providing, the needed training for water and wastewater operators by having our annual conference. The conference is set for March 15-17, 2021, in Kearney once again. The conference may have a different look and even a little different feel this year but most of all, it will provide operators in the great State of Nebraska the education and the recertification hours they really need.

The first thing operators may see differently will be the agenda. Monday will remain the same with the general session and a chance to grab four hours toward your water license. Tuesday will change slightly. Instead of having four concurrent sessions at once, we will be having three and we will be using two ballrooms at the Younes Center and one at the Holiday Inn. This will provide that social distance guidelines will be met. Tuesday will be worth six hours. Wednesday will look just like last year. There will be three concurrent sessions and four hours will be available toward your recertification. If more presenters become available as we get closer to the conference, there may be a chance that we can create a fourth concurrent session on Tuesday. Some loyal presenters that have always given presentations at the conference have not been given clearance to travel or do a conference such as this due to COVID. Some others are waiting on getting vaccinated before they attend such events. We completely understand and we are hoping that in 2022 we will see those awesome presenters again!

We have had several discussions in our office about how we can handle entertainment and the extracurricular activities for all of those in attendance. We finally decided that there may not be a safe way to do any of that this year. This does not mean that vendors and operators can’t do the things they’ve done in the past, it will just mean that we are not going to sponsor any thing like that. With that being said, it makes me think about the 2022 conference and if we can pull it off, we will put two years of entertainment into one! Our association takes pride in how we treat our members and conference attendees. You are all in it for us, and we will always be here for you, but we just need to think about the safety of everyone. Maybe if things change by March, we will be able to throw something together but as for now, these things will be pushed off until next year.

The chow line will look different this year as well. This year we will not be allowed to have the big buffets that everyone has learned to love. The food will still be fantastic as always, it will just be served to you by the Younes Conference Center staff. Our initial plan is to have a supper on Monday night, lunch and an evening meal on Tuesday, and lunch on Wednesday. There will not be a breakfast on Wednesday but we hope to have the annual meeting with the board. Please remember when you register to complete how many meals you will be eating. This will help us order the amount of meals necessary and not pay for meals that we estimated we would need.

With the use of the Holiday Inn Ballroom, along with the two large ballrooms at the Younes Center, we should meet the DHM for social distancing, and I would imagine there will be a mask requirement or recommendation for us to follow. We will follow the rules put before us by the State of Nebraska and the Two Rivers Health Department.

We hope everyone understands why we can’t have the “fun night” or banquet. Like I mentioned earlier, if restrictions do become less, we can always throw something together for all of you in a moment’s notice! When you work with a team like I get to here at Nebraska Rural Water, I am optimistic and excited that we will be able to pull this conference off! Hopefully we can all look at this as a new start to the way things used to be! Let’s focus on “MOVING FORWARD!”

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Nebraska Rural Water Association

Annual Conference Pre-Registration

March 15-17, 2021
Younes Conference Center
Kearney, Nebraska

Name (1 person per form) _____
 Water System/Company Name _____
 Billing Address _____
 Certificate Address _____
 City, State, Zip _____
 Attendee's Email _____

**Pre-Registration
 Deadline is March 8.
 THERE IS A \$25 LATE FEE
 AFTER February 26**

I am the Voting Delegate _____

(Certificates will be emailed if an email address is provided)

License numbers MUST be on this form: WO: _____ BF _____ WW _____ WD _____

**REGISTRATION INCLUDES TRAINING MATERIALS, MEALS AND BREAKS.
 No registrations after March 8. Registration fees on-site will increase by \$50.**

IF YOU REPLACE AN ALREADY REGISTERED PERSON AFTER MARCH 2, THERE WILL BE AN EXTRA \$25 CHARGE.

**CANCELLATIONS AFTER MARCH 8 AND NO SHOWS THE DAYS OF THE CONFERENCE WILL BE CHARGED A \$25 FEE
 TO COVER MATERIALS THAT WERE PREPARED BEFORE THE CONFERENCE.**

FORM MUST BE COMPLETED IN FULL OR YOU WILL NOT BE REGISTERED

The entire conference is free for all water system board members. I am a Board Member (no charge) _____

DAYS ATTENDING	Member	Member after February 24	Non-Member	Non-Member after February 24
FULL CONFERENCE (all meals)	___\$395.00	___420.00	___\$420.00	___\$445.00
MONDAY (evening meal)	___\$100.00	___125.00	___\$125.00	___\$150.00
TUESDAY (lunch & evening meal)	___\$175.00	___\$200.00	___\$200.00	___\$225.00
WEDNESDAY (breakfast & lunch)	___\$125.00	___\$150.00	___\$150.00	___\$175.00

Extra meal Tickets available	Guest Tickets	Cost	Total	Your Meals
Mon evening		\$25	\$	
Tues lunch		\$15	\$	
Tues Banquet		\$30	\$	
Wed lunch		\$15	\$	

All meals are included for each registration. Please indicate above if you will be staying for the evening meals. You will not be charged for them if you are registered—it's for a more accurate count. Guests need to purchase a ticket for every meal. The breakfast on Wednesday is complimentary for all registered for the conference.

Name of guest _____

When making room reservations, mention you are with NeRWA

To Register:
 Online: www.nerwa.org
 (If you register online, DO NOT mail one)
 Fax: 402-443-5274
 Mail: Nebraska Rural Water Association
 3390 Ponderosa Street
 Wahoo, NE 68066
NO PHONE REGISTRATIONS

Registration \$ _____
 Tickets \$ _____ Total \$ _____
 NeRWA member: Bill _____ Payment enclosed _____
**Non-members—Payment must accompany registration or
 pay when checking in.**
**CERTIFICATES WILL NOT BE ISSUED AND HOURS WILL
 NOT BE SUBMITTED TO STATE AGENCIES
 UNTIL PAYMENT IS RECEIVED.**

DATE REGISTRATION RECEIVED: _____

For NeRWA office use only: Payment received _____ Check # _____ Other _____
 Hours: WO _____ BF _____ WW _____ WD _____ Certificate mailed _____

CONFERENCE PRESENTATION DESCRIPTIONS

Continued from Page 3

FLEXIBLE DROP PIPE—Jim Lowery, Hose Solutions. With flexible drop pipe in a water well you can achieve many benefits over rigid pipe. Head loss, electrical savings, and different installations will be discussed.

NEBRASKA 811—Jill Geyer, Nebraska 811. This will be an in-depth look at the way Nebraska 811 has changed in several different aspects. It will also teach you the new way of retrieving and creating your “dig” tickets.

GOOD, BAD, AND UGLY—Rich Koenig, DHHS. See what you should do, should not do, and absolutely never do when it comes to installing backflow protection.

WATER TANK MAINTENANCE—Jake Dugger, Maguire Iron. Your water tank is your system’s most expensive asset. Find out the best ways to prevent problems with this valuable asset.

LOCATING YOUR UTILITIES—Brent Briley, Subsurface Solutions. This presentation will help you decide on the best and different ways you can locate your underground utilities.

COULD IT BE YOUR AUTOMATIC CONTROL VALVES—Brett Petersen, Mack McClain. This session will help you decide if your ACV valves could be creating a problem with your backflow preventer.

RADIAL COLLECTOR WELLS FOR DRINKING WATER SUPPLIES—Brad Harris, Layne Christensen. This presentation will give you an idea on how big some collector wells can be when it comes to providing clean, safe drinking water.

GENERATOR APPLICATIONS AND INSTALLATIONS—Dustin Burmood, Nebraska Generator. Find out how big of a backup generator you may need, and also receive guidance on the proper installation of generators.

BACKFLOW, WHAT IS IT?—Brett Petersen, Mack McClain. Learn the basic hydraulics of backflow and how it can harm your system.

METERING TECHNOLOGY/HOW TO GENERATE MORE REVENUE—Ian Coburn, Neptune Meter Co. Your water meter can be looked at as a cash register for your water system. You will learn how to get the most out of your metering system with the latest technology.

CURED IN PLACE PIPE—Brian McCrary, AEGION. This session will show the latest technology of repairing or replacing pipe without large excavations.

BACKFLOW TRIVIA—Rich Koenig, DHHS. Test your knowledge and have a little fun with this quick hour of the toughest backflow trivia questions you’ll ever hear.

ANATOMY OF THE WATER SERVICE LATERAL—Adam Laver, Lincoln Winwater. From lead to clear core plastic, learn how and why water service materials have changed over time.

NET DMRs—Alan Aanarud, NDEE. This session will be a refresher course for the tenured wastewater operator and a learning course for the new operators when it comes to filling out your DMRs.

USDA/RURAL DEVELOPMENT—Denise Meeks, USDA/RD. Get an update on funding options and completed projects with funding provided by the USDA/RD.

PROPER USE, CARE, AND APPLICATIONS FOR YOUR PERISTALTIC PUMP—Michael Pontrelli, Stenner Pump. Learn how to use your new peristaltic pump and see the best ways to maintain your pump.

TANK COATINGS—Ross Sudbeck, Modern Coating Solutions. This session gives you insight on which coating will work best for your water tank.

SEARCHING FOR LEAKS IN YOUR SYSTEM—Brent Briley, Subsurface Solution. Losing water means losing money. This session will show the importance of a non-leaking tight water system.

MANAGING ALL ASPECTS OF A LAGOON SYSTEM—Larry Wennekamp, City of Schuyler. This presentation will give operators a more in-depth look on what it takes to operate a lagoon system properly. These aspects will reach from the collection system, to the lift stations, and to the ponds.

OPERATOR/RURAL WATER ROUND TABLE—NeRWA Staff and Board. Gain insight from other operators and leaders of systems around the state if you attend this forum.

WASTEWATER CERTIFICATION UPDATES—Mike McBride, NDEE. This session will help guide the new operators and the seasoned veterans toward the recertification process.

WATER OPERATOR CERTIFICATION—Mike Wentink, DHHS. This session will update operators on the certification process and some possible changes that could be on the way.

BOARD TRAINING—Ken Halvorsen, NeRWA. This session will provide guidance for board members and employees on proper ways to hold a board meeting.

ANNUAL CONFERENCE MARCH 15-17, 2021

TENTATIVE AGENDA

Monday 15		Diamond Ballroom 4, 5, 9, and 10		
1:00	2:00	Updates to State of Nebraska Drinking Water Division-Sue Dempsey, DHHS Administrator 1W 1WD		
2:00	2:30	Break		
2:30	3:30	Lead and Copper Rule Update-Mary Poe, DHHS 1W 1WD		
3:30	4:00	Break		
4:00	4:30	NeWarn Update—Ryan Hurst, City of Wahoo .5W .5WD .5WW		
4:30	6:00	Effects of a Pandemic on the Drinking Water World Forum—Dave Jundt, Rich Koenig, DHHS Area Field Reps 1.5W 1.5WD		
Tuesday 16		Diamond Ballroom 4&5	Diamond Ballroom 9&10	Holiday Inn
9:00	10:00	Live Main Valve Insertion—Derek Olson, Lincoln Win-Water 1W	Basic Sewer Maintenance and Inspection—Monte Dakan, Johnson Service 1WW	Implementing an Effective Backflow Program—Rich Koenig, DHHS 1BR 1W 1WW
.50 Break				
10:30	11:30	Flexible Drop Pipe—Jim Lowery, Hose Solutions 1W 1WD	Nebraska 811 Update—Jill Geyer, 1W 1WW 1WD	Good, Bad, and Ugly—Rich Koenig, DHHS 1W 1WW 1BF
1 Hour Lunch				
12:30	1:30	Water Tank Maintenance—Jake Dugger, Maguire Iron 1W	Locating Your Utilities—Brent Briley, Subsurface Solutions 1W 1WW 1 WD	Could it be the Automatic Control Valve—Brett Petersen, Mack McClain 1W 1WW 1BF
.50 Break				
2:00	3:00	Radial Collector Wells for Drinking Water Supplies—Brad Harris, Layne Christensen 1W 1WD	Generator Applications and Installations—Dustin Burmood, Nebraska Generator 1W 1WW 1WD	Backflow, What is it?—Brett Petersen, Mack McClain 1W 1WW 1BF
.50 Break				
3:30	4:30	Meter Technology/How to Generate More Revenue—Ian Coburn, Neptune Meters Company 1W 1WD	Cured In Place Pipe—Brian McCrary, AEGION 1WW	Backflow Trivia—Rich Koenig 1W 1WW 1BF
.25 Break				
4:45	5:45	Anatomy of the Water Service Lateral—Adam Laver, Lincoln Win-Water 1W 1WD	NET DMRs—Alan Aanurud, NDEE 1WW	TBA
Wednesday 17		Diamond Ballroom 4&5	Diamond Ballroom 9&10	Holiday Inn
7:30	8:30	NeRWA Board Meeting		
8:30	9:30	Proper Use, Care, and Application for Your Peristaltic Pump—Michael Pontrelli, Stenner Pump Company 1W 1WW 1WD	Nebraska 811 Update—Jill Geyer 1W 1WW 1WD	Tank Coatings—Russ Sudbeck, Modern Coating Solutions 1W
.25 Break				
9:45	10:45	Searching for Leaks In Your Systems—Brent Briley, Subsurface Solutions 1W	Managing All Aspects of a Lagoon System—Larry Wennekamp, City of Schuyler 1WW	TBA
.25 Break				
11:00	12:00	TBA	Waste Water Certification Update—Mike McBride, NDEE 1WW	TBA
1.0 Hour Lunch				
1:00	2:00	Operator Certification—Mike Wentink, DHHS 1W	Board Training—Ken Halvorsen, NeRWA 1W 1WW	TBA

HOURS:
Monday: 4W, 4WD
Tuesday: 6W, 6WW, 6WD
Wednesday: 4W, 4WW, 1WD

Total Hours:
14 Water
10 Wastewater
10 Well Driller



Vulnerability Assessments

By Scott Finke, Circuit Rider

Driving down the road gives a person time to think about what to write for their next magazine article. Going out to the west and northwest part of the state, it is amazing to see how beautiful Nebraska is from the farm ground to the sandhills. The trips become a great adventure when I am able to visit new operators and do Vulnerability Assessments.

These assessments are done to see the amount of security you have on your water or wastewater systems. A vulnerability assessment is the process of defining, identifying, classifying and prioritizing vulnerabilities in computer systems, applications and network infrastructures. Vulnerability assessments also provide the organization doing the assessment with the necessary knowledge, awareness, and risk backgrounds to understand and react to the threats to the environment.

A vulnerability assessment process is intended to identify threats and the risks they pose. They typically involve the use of automated testing tools, such as network security scanners, whose results are listed in a vulnerability assessment report. Organizations of any size, or even individuals who face an

increased risk of cyber attacks, can benefit from some form of vulnerability assessment, but large cities and other types of organizations that are subject to ongoing attacks will benefit most from vulnerability analysis.

Because security vulnerabilities can enable hackers to access IT systems and applications, it is essential for villages and cities to identify and remediate weaknesses before they can be exploited. A comprehensive vulnerability assessment, along with a management program, can help villages and cities improve the security of their systems.

The assessments are due every three years, so if you have a USDA loan on your water or wastewater system you can do them yourself or I can come out to see you and do a vulnerability assessment on your system. As this article goes to print, I will probably be done this year with the assessments and will pick them back up next winter. Looking forward to seeing everybody at the spring conference. If you need anything please contact me at (402) 607-2249 or call the NeRWA office and we will get you taken care of.



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Ah, the Memories

By Barney Whatley, Capacity Development Specialist

When I first came to work for NeRWA in May of 1999, I was much younger and a little uncertain about what I was getting myself into. I applied for the position of “Deputy Circuit Rider” without really knowing what the job would entail. This was a new position being funded with a portion of the State Revolving Fund money that was set aside for technical assistance. Even the state was not sure what the duties of the person working under this contract would consist of. I spent the first several months of my new job driving around the state setting up and adjusting chlorine pumps for systems with Total Coliform issues. Most of these systems were small, privately-owned systems who could not receive technical assistance from our USDA Circuit Rider. I met a lot of nice water operators, and a few that were in over their heads, having bought a business that had its own well, thus making them the owner of a public water supply system.

After about six months, the Training Specialist position became vacant, and I applied and was hired for that position. That position was in charge of water operator training classes and backflow training, as well as setting up the annual and western conferences. I met many more operators in this position, many of whom I admire to this day for their dedication to their communities and keeping the water systems running smoothly. I enjoyed this position for about a year and a half, until the Deputy Circuit Rider position came open, and the NeRWA Board asked me to return to that position.

I returned to work as the Deputy Circuit Rider for a little over four years until NeRWA gave up the contract for that position. At that time I was offered the position of Source Water Specialist, which I accepted and fulfilled until 2007 when the NeRWA submitted a proposal for the Capacity Development grant from DHHS and was awarded the contract. This position was involved with system assessments, rate studies and income surveys among other things. This position lasted for six years until the grant was renewed and NeRWA did not receive the grant.

For the next two years, I was doing system mapping as the GPS specialist, a skill I had to learn from scratch as the software we had previously used was upgraded and the new version was very different from the old version. I still assist with the mapping now, but by locating points that need to be included in the map. The mapping itself is fee based, but

locating is done for free. From GPS specialist, I went back to Capacity Development Specialist, where I worked until late 2018 when illness required the Source Water Specialist to resign, and I once again took that position.

In addition to this, I worked as a USDA Circuit Rider for a while when Russ Topp was undergoing cancer treatments, and I got a Class 2 Wastewater Operators certification so I could assist in teaching math for the Wastewater Operator Class to prepare operators for the test. I have worked in every position currently available at NeRWA, except Wastewater Technician, and I have enjoyed all the time I have worked and all the fine water operators I have come to know. I will be retiring later this year, and I wish all of the water operators in the state the best of luck in their positions, and I hope you are all looking for your replacements as you near retirement.

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A Learning Experience

By Adam German, Source Water Technician

As this article is being written another five-day backflow class is wrapping up in the other room. The group is taking their final test in hopes of getting their grade VI water operator's license. For the past five days, 15 Nebraskans from across the state met up in Wahoo to learn all about the world of backflow. They spent the first two days in the classroom learning to identify different types of backflow methods, devices, and assemblies. On Wednesday the class headed to the back to start learning the testing procedures, with Thursday being the day they are tested on those procedures. This particular backflow class was a bit different. The proctor for the testing procedures was a student at the last five-day class held in October. That proctor was Adam German. Yep. Me.

If you haven't heard yet, the NeRWA's "Backflow Barney" will be retiring soon. I have spent the last several month's following Barney Whatley to backflow class after backflow class trying to learn all the ropes and skills it takes to teach these classes. I will be honest; I have learned a tremendous amount but still have a way to go before future classes go as smoothly and flawlessly as Barney's classes go. Barney is retiring in March; he will hopefully be around to help out for the five-day class in April, but after that I will be on my own. So, a little heads up... if you are planning on taking any backflow prevention classes in the future, give the new instructor a break; he's going to be a little nervous.

Another one of my new duties is in the Source Water Protection area. We have been helping a few small Nebraska systems recognize potential hazards that could become a problem to their public drinking water in the future. NeRWA will help the system form a steering committee of land owners and residents that are interested in learning about keeping Nebraska's drinking water safe; specifically, in their immediate area. We will explain to the steering committee, town officials, and the public, the benefits they can receive from not only the NeRWA, but also other agencies like the DHHS, NDEE, and NRDs that have the ability and willingness to help small systems find grants to help fund the goal of keeping water safe to drink. I do enjoy this part of the job. The Source Water Program is a great opportunity to get out and meet different people with the same goal...safe, clean drinking water.

Once again, I have found myself in a bit of a stressful situation. I have a lot to learn and a short amount of time to retain all of the stuff Barney is throwing at me. I'll get it figured out. I have already figured out that when it comes to having any questions or needing any help, the staff at NeRWA is always there. Barney hasn't retired yet and I have lots of questions for him. I look forward to adding to his grey hair collection in the upcoming months. Stay safe out there.

NeRWA SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION

The Nebraska Rural Water Association is pleased to announce it will be presenting two \$1,000 scholarships for higher education purposes for the school year 2021-2022 fall and spring semesters. The scholarship is available to children and stepchildren of member public water system employees. Employees of the Nebraska Rural Water Association Board of Directors and staff are not eligible. Interested persons should complete and submit the application. Applications are due March 8, 2021. Please type or print – **printing must be legible** and papers must be **clean**. Winners of the Scholarships will be announced at the Annual Conference in March. Send all information to the NeRWA address. **DO NOT FORGET TO EITHER SEND THE TRANSCRIPT AND GRADES OR HAVE THE SCHOOL SEND THEM.** Your application will not be valid unless everything is received. PLEASE SEE APPLICATION ON NEXT PAGE.

Official Rules: This grant of \$1,000 will be made to a student to defray the cost of tuition, books, or room and board at an accredited institution of higher learning approved by the Nebraska Rural Water Association (NeRWA). Disbursement of the money will be made upon presentation of winner's college or university invoice as proof of full-time enrollment. The scholarship money will be paid directly to the student, \$500 per semester. The scholarship will be awarded to children or stepchildren of member utility system employees. In order to be eligible for scholarship, applicants must complete the application form in its entirety by filling in all blanks. If item is not applicable please place a N/A in the blank. Upon completion return it to the NeRWA Scholarship Committee by the entry deadline, March 8, 2021. All applications will be first screened on the basis of leadership responsibilities in community and school activities as well as grade point average. Applicants will be evaluated on a comparative basis at the sole discretion of the committee. Decisions will be final. Application material and decisions of the committee shall be confidential. Acceptance of scholarship constitutes permission to use recipient's name and/or likeness for purpose of promotion.

**NEBRASKA RURAL WATER ASSOCIATION
SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION 2021**

Personal Data

NAME _____
Last First Middle
ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

Eligible System Employee Data

NAME _____ TITLE _____
ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
MEMBER SYSTEM _____ TELEPHONE _____
RELATIONSHIP TO APPLICANT _____ EMAIL _____

High School Data

SCHOOL NAME _____ GRADUATION DATE _____
ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
YOUR CLASS RANK _____ NUMBER OF STUDENTS IN CLASS _____ YOUR GRADE POINT AVERAGE _____

(High School Transcript and grades must be submitted with application)

LIST BELOW ANY ACADEMIC AWARDS, MEMBERSHIPS OR OTHER SPECIAL RECOGNITION YOU HAVE RECEIVED DATING BACK TO YOUR SOPHOMORE YEAR.

College/University Data

IS THIS YOUR FIRST YEAR OF HIGHER EDUCATION? YES _____ NO _____ IF NO, CREDIT HOURS COMPLETED _____
NUMBER OF CREDIT HOURS REQUIRED TO GRADUATE _____ COLLEGE GRADE POINT AVERAGE _____
SCHOOL NAME _____
ADDRESS _____ CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PLEASE INDICATE: _____ 4-YEAR COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY
_____ 2-YEAR COMMUNITY/JUNIOR COLLEGE
_____ VOCATIONAL TECHNICAL SCHOOL

MAJOR COURSE OF STUDY _____

Priority will be given but not limited to water related studies.

(For those already in college, a first semester transcript or grade report and second semester enrollment must accompany application)

Essay

ON A SEPARATE PAGE IN 250 WORDS OR LESS, WRITE A BRIEF MESSAGE ON YOUR GOALS AS THEY RELATE TO YOUR EDUCATION, CAREER AND FUTURE PLANS

Certification

IN SUBMITTING THIS APPLICATION, WE CERTIFY THAT THE INFORMATION PROVIDED IS COMPLETE AND ACCURATE TO THE BEST OF OUR KNOWLEDGE. FALSE INFORMATION WILL RESULT IN THE REVOCATION OF ANY SCHOLARSHIP GRANTED.

Applicant's Signature _____ Date _____

Parent Signature _____ Date _____



What Is Board Training and Why Do We Need It?

By Ken Halvorsen, Systems Specialist

“Why would we need that?” is how systems commonly respond when approached about Board Training. Excuses range from “It is hard enough getting members to a regular meeting, let alone an extra one” to “We already do everything right.”

In 1996, President Bill Clinton signed into law the 1996 Amendment to the Safe Drinking Water Act. Part of the amendment required the states to adopt capacity development strategies for existing and new community, non-community and non-transient public water systems. Capacity development for a water system is enabling the system to function as a business without external support and encompasses three main parts:

1. Technical capacity
2. Management capacity
3. Financial capacity

During the training session we cover these three main points and how the board, clerk, and water operator need to work together for the system to function smoothly. Board Training is a way to address the unique situations of your water system with flexible, on-site training with no cost to your system.

- Up to two- or three-hour training tailored to the specific needs of the water system
- Learn to create a self-sustainable, resilient water system
- Understand managerial responsibilities to ensure consistent delivery of safe drinking water for the community
- Gain knowledge for implementing an asset management program to bolster financial security
- Explore sustainable water rate structure
- Dive into the Open Meetings Act, communication, succession planning, budgeting, and implementing policies and procedures
- Problem-solve issues specific to your organization

This training will be tailored to the needs of your water system. Collecting questions from your community to be addressed at the training ensures that your expectations will be met. Following the training, continued correspondence and resources will be available.

Small public water systems face many challenges unique to their size, including aging infrastructure, a small or declining customer base, and limited resources. Deeper understanding of financial and managerial practices, implemented with sound planning, help small systems meet these challenges.

Contact
Ken Halvorsen
at ken@nerwa.org
or (402) 607-9750.



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Top Ten Problems Encountered 2020

By Charles Buckley, Wastewater Technician

- 1. Roots in the collection system.** My biggest call this year was problem areas in sewer mains. I have been called out to run our camera down the mains, usually to find roots infiltrating into the main at joints and service connections. This can be remedied by lining the pipes, use of a foaming root inhibitor or cutting the roots with a cutter or by high pressure water root cutter.
- 2. Infiltration.** Go for a ride on a heavy rain event and look to see what manholes have runoff flowing over and around them. This can be eased by the use of manhole pans. Pop some manhole lids after a heavy rain and see if water is leeching in the walls of the manhole. If you find this to be happening look into rehabbing the walls of the manhole. This can pay for itself in less than a year. We have also had luck with smoking sewer mains. We have found many problem areas throughout the state with this method. We have found missing or broken cleanout caps, voids under streets that collect rain water, homes and businesses with gutters connected to collection systems and storm sewers connected to sewer mains. Lining sewer mains in problem areas is expensive but sometimes the best fix.
- 3. New operators.** We would be happy to walk through the public works with the operator. We can assist with operations, record keeping, safety, regulations, maintenance, planning and problems.
- 4. Training.** We no longer offer classes on wastewater certification training. Contact the DEE office to find out about wastewater certification and testing. We do still offer classes for continuing education hours.
- 5. Sampling.** We will assist operators with sampling. We have several composite samplers that we would be happy to set up. We will assist in the collecting of samples, PH, temperature and proper techniques.
- 6. Locating resources.** We get call requests to help find contractors for bids on projects. We are always happy to help operators and board members to find the right contractor for the right price. We understand that most projects need to put up for bid. We have a list in our membership directory and on our website. We also have multiple vendors at our yearly conferences. This gives operators a chance to speak with businesses that may be of assistance to projects, parts, maintenance, repairs and other resources.
- 7. Troubleshooting.** Probably one of our favorites. There is nothing more fulfilling for us then to show up and assist in

getting to the bottom of a problem. We have a great pool of experienced operators at Nebraska Rural Water.

- 8. Lagoon measuring.** We will come out and assist with lagoon measuring. We can grid or spot measure your lagoons for sludge depth and lagoon depth. All we ask is you provide a safe boat, life jackets, anchor and a source of mobility. We also require the assistance of the operator.
- 9. Flow monitoring.** We have a portable flow monitoring unit that we can set up to measure flows. We can set up to monitor flows daily, weekly or the entire month. The flowmeter can run on battery or electricity. We only ask that you have access to the manhole and pipe dimension. This will require daily changing of the battery and cleaning.
- 10. General assistance.** We have assisted in locating lines, valves, paper work, DMRs, lab testing, equipment replacement, locating parts, algae control, red worm control, treatment plant operations, lagoon problems, board member assistance, sustainability management and other assistance.



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**THE ANNUAL
WATER TASTING
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CANCELLED**

Last year the City of Franklin won and will be sending their water to the national water tasting contest at the Water Rally in Washington, DC, in February 2022.



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GUIDELINES FOR CONTINUING ED HOURS

This article addresses all training including backflow licensure, backflow continuing ed classes, water and wastewater classes, and both conferences.

All water and backflow licenses need to be renewed by December 31, 2021. The next license period will be 2022-2023. A wastewater license is renewed 2 years after the date your license was issued.

The hours required for renewal for each license are listed below:


1. Water and backflow – 2-year renewal period requiring 10 continuing ed hours. The end of the renewal period is always December 31 of odd numbered years. An easy tip is to get 5 hours per year. Start early in the year to get your hours. **THE LAST 3 MONTHS OF THE RENEWAL YEAR GET VERY BUSY.** Register early! We have people trying to register for classes in October thru December close to the date of the class. November and December classes are usually full 2 to 3 months before the classes.
2. Wastewater – A 2-year renewal period with 20 continuing ed hours.

When you attend any class, you get a certificate. Keep that certificate in a place where you can easily find it. Sometimes you will have to send a certificate to the state department as proof of attendance. If you lose the first certificate, you can request a second one. After that, each certificate will cost \$20.

Flyers for all training classes (unless they are full way in advance) are either mailed or emailed to all our members. The classes are listed in our quarterly magazine which is also mailed to our members. We publish a training calendar each year that is mailed to all operators we have listed. This calendar is available on our website also. A tip for all operators – bookmark our website or save it in your favorites. This way you can keep updated on class dates, addresses, and the agenda. Agendas are posted about a month before the class. Cancellations, and if a class is full, will also be noted there.

When you register online for any fee-based class, you can also pay online. If you choose not to pay, we will send you an invoice. **EXCEPTION: ANY backflow class that is held in the last 3 months of the renewal year needs to be paid before the class.** If payment is not received before the class, it will be assumed the person registered has decided not to attend and the space will be made available to someone on the waiting list.

You can register for water and wastewater classes by phone, fax, mail or online. The virus situation has caused us to reduce the number of attendees we can have in any one class. If you register and do not attend it takes a spot away from someone else who may have needed hours. Any class or conference that has a fee must be registered for by fax, mail, or online. **REGISTRATIONS BY PHONE CALL OR EMAIL FOR A FEE-BASED CLASS ARE NOT ACCEPTED.**



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Nebraska Good Water News

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Contact NeRWA... ▼

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League of Municipalities
Nebraska Section, AWWA
AWWA Library Reference Listings
NeRWA Associate Members

NeRWA Contact Information:

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City of Friend Pool Chemicals For Sale:

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Qty.	Amount of Product	Product	Price
2	55-gal drum	Filter Cleaner	\$250.00 each
1	55-gal drum	Descaler	\$300.00
1	55-gal drum	PH Down	\$300.00
1	30-gal drum	PH Down	\$100.00
1	55-gal drum	Pool Flocculent	\$250.00
5	55-gal drum	Swimming Pool Water Conditioner	\$100.00 each
1	55-gal drum	Algae Remover <i>(keeps water clear and algae out)</i>	\$250.00
40	50-lb bags	Filter Powder	\$25.00 per bag
4	6-gal	Granular Chlorine	\$45.00 each

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

The following NeRWA board members will be running for re-election to the association Board of Directors at the annual conference in Kearney held on March 15-17, 2021.

Larry Wennekamp, City of Schuyler
Tom Grovijohn, Village of Dodge
George Wagner, Village of Hooper

Two positions must be filled by a delegate from a utility system and the other by either a rural water system or a utility system.

Requirements for the above positions:

- Must be the voting delegate or alternate delegate from system
- Must attend monthly board meetings, held in Wahoo
- Attendance at the spring conference is required
- Attendance at the fall conference is encouraged
- Occasional out-of-state travel is possible

If you are interested in running for any of the above positions, please submit a letter and a resume so indicating. The deadline is March 1, 2021. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact our office.

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- Gain knowledge to address challenges faced by the water system
- Understand how and why to implement an asset management program and structure sustainable rates
- Dive into the Open Meetings Act, communication, succession planning, budgeting, and implementing policies and procedures
- Problem-solve issues specific to your organization

Address the unique challenges of your water system with flexible, on-site training without cost to the system.

Take advantage of this opportunity by contacting:

Nebraska Rural Water Association

Ken Halvorsen ken@nerwa.org 402.607.9750



Funding provided by the Nebraska Drinking Water State Revolving Fund, administered by the Department of Health and Human Services and the Department of Environment and Energy.

Nebraska: St. Derooin, Nemaha County

A tiny ghost town within the limits of Indian Cave State Park, St. Derooin has been all but abandoned for almost a century. Surrounded by woodland today, the town was once the site of a busy ferry crossing, but when the Missouri River changed course, the settlement fell into decline and by the 1920s it was completely deserted. Curious modern visitors can explore the preserved St. Derooin cemetery, as well as the old school-house and general store.



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